



Now is the moment!

This issue of the Herald is reflective, and rightly so. We have just celebrated 150 years of sustained missionary effort, and in doing so, sought to give God all the glory. At Solihull we were overwhelmed by your support and stirred in our hearts as we reflected on the work and thanked God for the quality of people he has and is using to advance his kingdom. I hope you enjoyed the whole day. If you weren't there I am sorry, as you missed something very special.



However we must press on; the time for reflection is over. In the words of Nehemiah, 'Let's start rebuilding', there is much work to be done. There is new ground to occupy, and new cities to penetrate. There are many hearts and minds across various cultures that have yet to be influenced by the gospel, and within churches across the world there is much culturally relevant Bible teaching still to be done.

As Don Carson reminded us during our Missionary Conference at Cloverley Hall, opposition in gospel work is pre-supposed. In other words, it is the norm, and therefore we were encouraged to never, never give up! Despite opposition, ridicule, sin from inside/outside, disappointment, frustration and deviousness we must never, never give up!

Nehemiah was an extremely influential man; his single mindedness about the task God placed upon his heart rubbed off on the people around him. What gave him such confidence and what made him so influential? He had unshakeable confidence in God, and he was deeply conscious that God's hand was upon all that he had planned. The people knew it, so they followed his lead and got to work.

We must not shirk our responsibility to influence this generation. We must reach the world of our day by being confident in God, his Word, his power and his promises and re-focus our efforts on reaching people who have replaced God with their own gods, as well as strengthening churches through solid biblical instruction. Now is the moment to be people of influence, relying on the Spirit, confident in the Word and not afraid or embarrassed to cross any cultural or church boundaries for the gospel's sake.

Will we do this? Will a future generation look back and judge us well? Do we, as churches, have world/UK cross cultural mission at the very heart of our vision, strategy and mission statements? Mission needs church leaders, pastors, who are strident and visionary in pressing upon every member of their congregation, including themselves, the possibility of missionary service!

We need Bible teachers, evangelists and radio/internet communicators, people whose integrity is shaped by a fear of God. Resolute, determined men and women, called by God to a task, and those who will never, never give up!

Will you be part of your church's future in world mission?
Trevor Condy

*As one would expect, Dr Carson rightly set such a statement in its context, because there may be times when it is right to give up!



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- 2 Chairman's Notes
- 3 Cheering missionaries at Cloverley
- 6 Envision opportunities
- 7 A great day in Solihull 
- 10 The portrait of an eclipsed Baptist 



- 12 Farewell Spain 
- 14 John Appleby Obituary
- 15 The GBM holiday experience 



Cover photo: Clockwise from top: Missionaries and Council at Cloverley Hall; Missionaries singing in the front row at Solihull; the BBC outside broadcast van; Don Carson preaches Nehemiah at Cloverley.

INFORMATION

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GBM exists to help churches to support and care for their missionaries worldwide for ministries of evangelism, church planting, teaching, radio and literature.

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Cloverley Hall Missionary Conference

From Wednesday 26th to Friday 28th October, almost all the missionaries gathered at Cloverley Hall with Mission Council and a few invited guests for a special missionary conference. The overwhelming response of the missionaries is that we must do this again before too many years pass. Here are their thoughts.

At last!

Having been in communication with the Mission since before 1980 it was great to finally get to know almost all of my 'colleagues' on the field – as well as some others!

I had been looking forward to this conference, due to start Wednesday lunchtime, but I think it actually started for me when I was collected by Keith and Pauline Johns at Stansted. It was good getting to know them, as well as Adam Laughton, on the journey to Cloverley. We were already having great fellowship and fun in the car and this continued right through into the great meetings on Saturday.

The ministry was good, and I think I especially enjoyed the fellowship at mealtimes, taking walks and just meeting in the passage for a chat. The amount of work put in by all those involved in the preparations, especially the colleagues at Abingdon, was greatly appreciated and certainly played an important part in making it such a great success.

Probably it was one of the most refreshing visits I have had to the UK and although I did have a little sleep to catch up on, I felt more as if I had returned from holiday than anything else!

Jean Ellis

From India to Britain

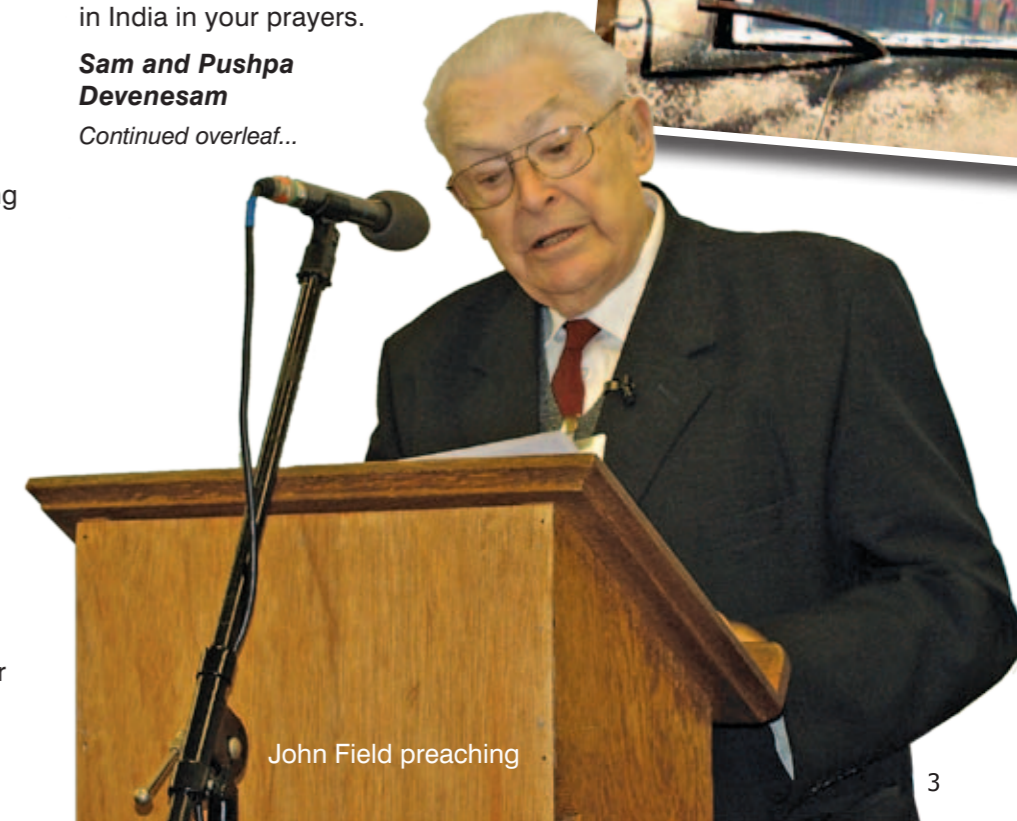
Pushpa and myself are very grateful for the invitation by the GBM to attend the missionary conference at Cloverley Hall. We consider this as a real privilege to meet our ex-Indian missionaries and others. We enjoyed the stay at Cloverley Hall. We thank God for the good weather we had in those days. We also enjoyed the good food over there.

We never thought that we could meet Mr John Field. We really enjoyed good fellowship with him during our stay. In his opening message he narrated some of the incidents he had with my father. His message on the reigning of Christ as Lord of the earth and of the Church was challenging to us. In the present Indian scenario we as servants of God only rely on the Sovereign Lord and his empowerment in facing escalating opposition.

We appreciate the hard work put up by the GBM staff all through these special programmes. We thank each one of them for their loving service. We give our heartfelt thanks to the GBM Council and staff. We also record our thanks to all our dear friends who provided for our shelter all through our stay in England. Please continue to uphold us and the ministry in India in your prayers.

Sam and Pushpa Devenesam

Continued overleaf...



John Field preaching



Don Carson preaching



Main meeting

The newby's view

Being new to GBM we didn't know many people when we arrived at Cloverley Hall. Our three days together were a wonderful opportunity to meet the other missionaries, most of whom we had only read about. In fact, it was the first opportunity we had to really talk in depth with the Donners – from the same home church! It was great to get to know the Council members and catch up with the Abingdon staff.

Over coffee breaks, meals times and in the lunch queue there were warm conversations... in many languages! The seminars provoked interesting discussions that often continued informally later in the day and further enabled us to understand each other's situations and specific challenges.

Cloverley Hall was a perfect location. Some took advantage of the beautiful grounds for afternoon walks, while others enjoyed getting to know each other over a game of table tennis or table football. The lounges were comfortable places to continue our conversations and the well-equipped crèche meant the parents of little ones were able to talk together while the toddlers amused themselves.

It was a really special three days. I feel much more part of the body of GBM missionaries working round the world now. Names in the prayer diary will take on a new significance as I think of what we shared in fellowship together at Cloverley.

Alison Eždenci

Missionary Reports

We heard five missionary reports, spanning almost all continents of the globe. Gilbert McAdam reported on gospel progress in the Chinese-Filipino church he is pastoring in Manila. In recent years, a significant number of Filipino believers have joined (a challenge for the Chinese) but the church agreed unanimously that they must represent the heavenly reality that 'every tribe and tongue' worship the Lord Jesus Christ together.

Andrzej and Monika Kempczyński remain very positive in their church-plant in Legionowo, Poland. The work is small and progress is slow, yet there is a growing awareness of their work in the community. Pat Davies had to cram thirty eight years of missionary work in Spain into her ten minutes, from her disappointment at not going to India, to early days in Valencia working in a dictatorship, as well as later work in Santa Cruz and Barcelona. We were encouraged to hear from Anthony Green of spiritual progress in Arequipa, with a new children's work (and church-planting opportunity) in Villa Majesterial. Pray too for Ronny & Rocio Tipismana, who continue to serve the Lord at the church in Simon Bolivar. Ian Flanders told of the Radio ministry around the globe, especially in India and Africa (with programmes in both English and French). Please pray for the ongoing search to find a new team member after Derek French's retirement (2012, DV).

Adam Laughton – Council

Don Carson on Nehemiah

Nehemiah is best remembered for his leadership skills as he oversaw the rebuilding of Jerusalem's ruined walls. But he was not just an exemplary site manager. The book named after him reveals achievements that outshine mere bricks and mortar.

Don Carson treated us to an in-depth exposition of this book, in five sessions! The over-arching theme of this sermon series could be defined as reformation: a passion to see God's people re-aligned to God's covenant promises and purposes. The public reading of the law underlines that the Word of God must be central to any attempt at reformation, but true spiritual transformation only came as the people solemnly confessed their waywardness and committed themselves afresh to keeping the covenant.

Don Carson demonstrated that Nehemiah's plan to ensure the sacrifices at the temple was not peripheral but central. The temple sacrifices mediated God's forgiveness and reconciliation. At its heart, reformation seeks to rekindle a vibrant, living relationship with God and this is best achieved through remembrance,

enacted by sacrifice, of the cost of God's compassionate, merciful forgiveness. The temple sacrifices were of course but signposts, pointing the way to the cross of Christ. Our remembrance and recommitment occur as we celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Nehemiah seems to end on a sad note. Following some time away from Jerusalem, Nehemiah returns only to discover that things have gone wrong in his absence. This should not lead us to belittle his achievements but rather serve as a reminder that whatever progress or successes God may have granted us in the past, in a fallen world they will remain vulnerable and frail. Reformation is an ongoing process requiring the same vigilance, wisdom and determination as displayed by Nehemiah, until the day when the New Jerusalem descends from heaven.

Ian Flanders

Listening to the missionaries

In one of the discussion sessions, Andrew Gullett addressed the issue of how GBM can help missionaries adjust to living and working in a new culture. He recalled that, contrary to expectations, he and Danielle were initially 'tired, disorientated, and afraid'. A whole new set of skills had to be acquired, and everyday things such as cooking, shopping and driving had to be approached in a new way. Uncertainty – a threat in the UK – is acceptable in Kenya. It is easy for a newly arrived missionary to place themselves under pressure to be able to show results very quickly. In discussion, the need for proper orientation courses became clear. Pat Davies recalled that she was sent out with little more than an air ticket to Valencia. Unfortunately the plane went to Barcelona...!

Fiona Steward spoke about communication with churches and supporters. Mission work cannot be done without communication. The relationship between a missionary and their supporting churches is a partnership. News from the missionary feeds interest, and interest feeds prayer. In turn the missionary should take an interest in supporting churches. She pointed out that love is one of the greatest catalysts for prayer.

Derek French spoke of how the Mission helps workers facing retirement. For those who return to the UK after years abroad, registering with doctors, dentists, and utilities can be bewildering and help should be readily available to those suffering reverse culture shock. This was a very profitable session that all present found helpful.

Keith Johns

The view from Peru

I'd like to begin thanking God for giving me the opportunity to be here in England. I want to share something of my experience during the missionary conference at Cloverley Hall. It was three unforgettable days, being together with all the missionaries from different parts of the world, being able to speak to them about their work, their joys, their difficulties, their needs, and how people receive the gospel in different places. It encouraged me very much to continue sharing the gospel in Peru, knowing how easy it is to have a conversation with someone there about the Lord, compared to other parts of the world.

We listened to the Word of God every day, and were encouraged not to abandon our ministries. What a joy it is to know that men and women are called to leave their own country, and work in different ministries, whether that be in radio, in an orphanage, in a seminary or in churches. I will be praying for all those I have met during the conference, and they for the work in Peru. Thanks be to God and to the Mission for these wonderful days that I have spent here.

Rocio Tipismana – Arequipa, Peru

Mission and money

Wow – what a brilliant few days! Good preaching, encouraging fellowship and lots of helpful discussion. For me the highlight was the sessions where we got to think about some of the challenges that we face as missionaries, and the most helpful was the one led by Graham Jones.

'Mission and money is one of the most draining issues we've found in our work' began Graham and I'm sure others would echo those sentiments! The beggars you walk past on the street. The people who come to your house asking for help. Members of the church wanting to borrow money. Situations that leave you feeling torn apart as you try to work out the right thing to do.

Money can do a lot of good. And yet it can also create a lot of problems! So how can we be both wise and generous? How do I know when to say 'no' and yet stop myself from just becoming cold and cynical to the needs of people around me?

The discussion after showed that this is a topic that isn't easy and requires much prayer and thought. So how do we work through the challenge of money and mission? Graham's final words summed it up perfectly – 'With great difficulty.' Stimulating, helpful and encouraging to know I'm not the only one who really struggles with this!

Matt Gamston



The children's programme with Tirzah Jones



Informal fellowship



What the children made



Sonja, Ellen, Cliff and Yvonne



Fellowship in Spanish